

Image Worship in Armenia and Its Opponents*

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[67] The history of iconoclasm in the Byzantine Empire has been the object of numerous studies, and scholars have shown that before this controversy broke out in the eighth century, there had been sporadic expressions of an opposition to the representation of sacred subjects. It has been stated that this feeling was stronger in the eastern provinces, but the attitude of the eastern churches has not yet been seriously investigated. Such a study lies beyond the scope of an article; it may be useful, however, to consider the position held by the Church of Armenia, and the iconoclastic tendencies which appeared at various times in that country.

We have no information about image-worship or even representations of religious scenes during the first centuries after the conversion of Armenia. The early writers make no specific mention of the decoration of churches (1), though they repeatedly recall the crosses erected everywhere. Agathangelus relates, for instance, that when Saint Gregory the Illuminator completed the construction of the chapels over the remains of the virgin-martyrs Hrip'sime, Gayane, and their companions, he placed in them "the sacred sign of the Lord's cross, saying: you will bow down before this life-giving sign of the Lord God your Creator" (2). The king and the people built a wall around these chapels, and the cross was again erected [68] "so that anyone coming to that place should kneel and prostrate himself before God, the Creator" (3). The cross was raised on the roads and the streets, in the public places and the cross-roads, to be honored by everyone (4). The importance of the cross and of its worship is emphasized by Saint Gregory. Speaking to King Tiridates he says: "Instead of the wooden idols, Christ raised His cross in the midst of the universe, so that those who were accustomed to bow down before wood, should, from habit, also bow down before the wood of the cross and before Him who was on it in the likeness of man" (5). Crosses occupied the most prominent places in the church which Saint Gregory saw in his vision (6).

As Christianity was more firmly established in the country, biblical scenes, and portraits of Christ and of the saints began to be represented, together with the crosses which continued to be held in particular honor. This can be seen from the numerous carved tomb-stones, or cross-stones (*khatchk'ar*) found in the vicinity of the old basilican churches, and dating before the seventh century. In addition to the cross, we find portraits of Christ, the Virgin, various saints; and simplified compositions of the Baptism, the Holy Women at the Sepulcher, the Sacrifice of Abraham, and Daniel in the Lion's Den (7).

Figure sculpture appears on the churches about the same time. Portraits of Christ and saints, enclosed in medallions, decorate the archivolt of a window on the south facade of the church of Ptghavank', built by Manuel Amatuni in the middle of the sixth century (8). A large relief of the standing Virgin, with the Christ-child, adored by angels and the donor, is carved over the door of a small church near Haridj (9). At Mren, built by David Saharuni between the years 638 and 641, one of the tympanums is filled with two [69] angels, and, on the lintel, Christ and three saints stand at the sides of a large cross (10).

Mosaic fragments discovered at Dvin and Zvart'nots, remains of wall-paintings at Mren, Tekor, T'alish and T'alın indicate that the interiors of the churches were also decorated. This decoration must have been richer and more wide-spread than might be surmised from the surviving evidence, for, otherwise, one could not understand the opposition which broke out in the late sixth or early seventh century.

A brief account of this first phase of iconoclasm in Armenia is given by the *vardapet* [doctor of the church] John Mayragometsi, in a letter written about the year 682 or 683 to David, bishop of Aghuania [Caucasian Albania; Atrpatakan] (11). John relates that during the reign of the Catholicos Moses (574-604), three priests named Hesu, (Joshua), Thaddeus, and Grigor, began to preach that "the images painted in the churches should be destroyed." They had left Dvin, the capital of Persarmenia, and gone to the canton of Sot'k'; when they were recalled by the Catholicos, they went farther east, to the province of Artsakh and the neighboring country of the Aghuanians. Their preaching must have been accompanied by definite action against the images for the doctors of the patriarchal see, probably upon the request of the Catholicos, wrote a letter saying: "Let no one dare to insult the images which are in the churches." These iconoclasts also caused disturbances in Aghuania; they were arrested by the Lord of Gardman, and sent before John Mayragometsi who convinced them of their error. But they must have made many converts in Aghuania, for some fifty years later, there were still men there "who did not accept the images" (12).

There is a passing reference to this iconoclastic movement and to the part played by John Mayragometsi in the chronicle of Mekhit'ar Ayrevanetsi (13). The Catholicos John of Odsun also alludes to it in his treatise, "Against the Paulicians," for he speaks [70] of the heretics who went into all parts of Armenia after the death of Nerses II (A.D. 557), and who were joined by certain iconoclasts pursued by the Aghuanians (14). We are better informed by a treatise ascribed to Vrt'anes K'ert'ogh, the learned *vardapet* who directed the affairs of the church during the three-year interim between the death of the Catholicos Moses, and the election of his successor (604-607). I have discussed this work in the current issue of *Byzantion*, and given the reasons for maintaining the seventh-century date, which had been questioned (15). I need only consider here the arguments set forth by the opponents and the defenders of images.

The Armenian iconoclasts, and probably their Aghuanian adherents, proclaimed that the practice of representing sacred subjects in the churches was contrary to the commandments of the scriptures, that image-worship was a form of idolatry, of adoration of vile matter. The refutation is based first of all on scriptural arguments. The scriptures forbid idolatry but not all representations, for Moses ordered two golden cherubim to be placed over the ark of the covenant; Solomon's temple was decorated with cherubim and palms; and there were similar paintings in the temple which Ezechiel saw in his vision. Several passages from the Church Fathers are next quoted to prove that they favored the images. The author, then explains that there is no connection between the idolatrous and Christian practices, for the pagans worshipped the idols of false gods, while the Christians worship the images of Christ, the Virgin and the saints. The argument that matter is vile cannot be held as valid, for nothing which has been made by God is vile, and, furthermore, the Christians do not worship the matter, but Him whom the picture represents. "When we bow down before the Holy Gospel, or when we kiss it, we do not bow down before the ivory or the lake color...but before the work of the Saviour written on the parchment. ...It is not because of the colors that we prostrate ourselves before the images, but because of Christ in whose name they were painted. ...For we attain the invisible through what is visible; and the pigments and the pictures are memorials of the living God and of His servants" (16).

[71] In contrasting the decorations of Christian and pagan monuments, the author enumerates the subjects represented in the churches. They are: the Virgin holding the Christ-child on her knees; the martyrdoms of Saint Gregory the Illuminator, of Saint Hrip'sime, Gayane, and their companions; the stoning of Saint Stephen; portraits of the prophets, apostles and other saints; the divine cross; the principal Gospel scenes: Nativity, Baptism, Passion, Crucifixion, Entombment, Resurrection, Ascension. The mention of the national saints, Gregory the Illuminator, Hrip'sime, and Gayane, clearly indicates that the author has in mind the decoration of

Armenian churches. He thus gives us most valuable information concerning the extensive iconographic cycle used in the early seventh century.

The Church made every effort to suppress this iconoclastic movement which appears to have been confined, at first, to the eastern provinces, but it spread further when it was revived by the Paulicians. The earlier iconoclasts represented and worshipped the cross (16a); with the Paulicians the opposition "passed from the attack against the images, to the attack against the cross, and to the hatred of Christ," as writes the Catholicos John of Odsun (717-728) (17). The old accusations of idolatry, of the adoration of inanimate matter, of following practices contrary to the teaching of the Scriptures reappear; the refutation is again partly based on scriptural arguments, and on the difference between pagan and Christian images. John of Odsun does not enter into as detailed a discussion of matter as his predecessor had done, but he refers to it in his insistence that the Church represents "in every material the human appearance of the living and life-giving Christ," and that in seeing a cross or an image made of stone or gold, we do not place our faith in the [72] stone or in the gold, as did the pagans (18). He explains that it is possible to represent the image of God because of the incarnation. Man could not visualize the greatness of the Creator, which is invisible even to the cherubim, but God took pity on him, and He, who in the beginning of time had made man in His image and likeness, assumed the human form. Thus, the Word, being made flesh, taught us to worship the image of His human form, and the noble symbol of His victory. In bowing down before them, he adds, "I do not doubt that I am bowing down before Christ enthroned on them; and while looking at the visible, I recall to mind the invisible. Although they are made of various and different materials, I see in them all the one and same power" (19).

A new element appears in John of Odsun's "Treatise against the Paulicians" in the references to the consecration of crosses and images. "When the churches, altars, crosses, and images are anointed with oil, he writes, we believe that divine power enters into them. They are thus distinguished from other, similar matter, just as we ourselves are distinguished from those who wrongly believe that matter is divine" (20). Because of this power they can perform miracles; inanimate matter could not help the living men, if God did not dwell in it (21). One must not suppose, however, that because God is everywhere, every object must be worshipped; the worship must be confined to those which have been anointed. This is again stipulated in two of the canons promulgated by John of Odsun. Canon 27: "If anyone shall make a cross of wood, or of any other material, and not give it to the priest for him to bless and anoint it with the holy oil, one must not honor that cross or prostrate himself before it, for it is void and empty of the divine power, and [such practice] is contrary to the traditions of the Apostolic Church." Canon 28: "As for those which have been blessed and anointed, so that they may become instruments of the divine mystery, one must honor and worship them, prostrate oneself before them and kiss them. For the Holy Ghost dwells in them, and through them dispenses his protection to men, and the graces of healing of the ailments of souls and bodies...." (22).

The only image specifically mentioned by John of Odsun is that of Christ. His insistence on the representations and the worship of [73] the cross may be partly due to the attacks of the Paulicians. But it also seems that during the period of Arab domination the iconographic cycle had become more restricted, and many of the earlier works had disappeared. The historian Ghevond, writing in the late eighth century, reports that Yezid II, (720-724), "broke and destroyed the images representing the true incarnation of our Lord and Saviour, those of His disciples, as well as the cross erected in certain places" (23). After the battle of Bagrevan, in 772, "filled with hatred against all the places of worship, and the sanctuaries dedicated to Jesus Christ, the Arabs strove to destroy them. They broke and burnt the glorious cross of Christ erected before the doors, to serve as a protection and a refuge to all those who came to worship the consubstantial Trinity...They took away by force the sacred objects and the relics of the saints of God" (24).

After the overthrow of Arab domination at the end of the ninth century, religious art flourished in Armenia. Figure sculpture and paintings covered the walls of the monuments erected by the Bagratid and Ardžruni princes, by the catholicoses, bishops, and abbots. We have an outstanding example in the church of Aght'amar,

on Lake Van, which is entirely covered with reliefs; but in other regions as well special attention was paid to the decoration of the churches. The historian Stephen Orbelian speaks of the rich paintings which adorned the churches built in the province of Siunik' during the first half of the tenth century. At Tsak'utn, for instance, Gospel scenes, portraits of Christ, the apostles, and the Church Fathers covered the walls (25). However, though the historians repeatedly speak of wall paintings, of rich crosses, some of which contained precious relics of the true cross (26), there are but few references to panel pictures or icons. In the late seventh century the patrice Ashot, (685-689), had brought from Constantinople "the image of the incarnation of Christ," and placed it in his newly-built church at Dariunk' (27). There were also, in Armenia, some miraculous images, such as that of the Virgin at Hogiats Vank'. This portrait was said to have been painted by the apostle John, on a fragment of the cross, shortly before the death of the Virgin. According to [74] the account given by Moses of Khoren, the apostles, gathered at Jerusalem, had requested the Virgin to bless this image, and to beg from her Son that it might receive the power of cleansing leprosy (28). After some hesitation, the Virgin had complied with their wishes, and when she finished praying over the image, a light, in the shape of the cross, had fallen on it. The apostle Bartholomew, who was preaching the Gospel in India with Saint Thomas, had arrived too late to see the Virgin. In order to comfort him, the other apostles gave him the portrait which he carried with him to Armenia. When he reached the banks of the Tigris, he built the monastery which he named Hogiats Vank', and a small church in honor of the Virgin, in which he placed her portrait. From that time on, many miracles were performed through the power of the Virgin and of her portrait.

Another miraculous image venerated in Armenia was the wooden relief of the Descent from the Cross, known as the "Saviour of all," (*Amenap'rkitich*), kept in the church of Havut'ar and later transferred to Etchmiadzin (29). The legendary origin of this relief is connected with the Crucifixion. John, witnessing the Virgin's grief, had taken a piece of the cypress wood left from the cross, and begged Christ to imprint His image on it. His prayers were answered, the miracle took place, and the Virgin filled with great joy took the image, embraced it, pressed it against her face, and wetting it with her tears exclaimed: "This is truly portrayed, my crucified Son, called the Saviour" (30).

The general practice in Armenia was to have a single picture, or the cross, over the altar. Distaste for the presence of numerous images was partly expressed in the action taken against the Catholicos Vahan, who was deposed in 969 after ruling for only one year. Vahan was accused of trying to renew the errors of the council of Chalcedon by introducing images into the churches (31). Stephen [75] Orbelian, who gives the fullest account, relates that the Catholicos Vahan "began to bring images from the Georgians, and placed them on the altar. He commanded all the other churches to do likewise, to decorate them with icons according to the custom of the Greeks, and not to celebrate mass without an icon. Because of this they all thought that he had allied himself with the Greeks and wished to introduce their heresy into the church" (32). In speaking of the different church councils, he repeats that the holy fathers assembled at Ani, found that Vahan shared the beliefs of the Georgians, "and because he introduced images into the Armenian churches, and the radiance of the cross was removed from the altars and they were decorated with icons, he was expelled with anathema" (33).

This action of the council of Ani should not be interpreted as an example of iconoclasm. Vahan's expulsion was motivated by his Chalcedonian leanings; the images were merely the outward form of his sympathies. It has been suggested that in using the Greek work icon, instead of the Armenian equivalent of image, and in speaking of Greek usage Stephen Orbelian was referring to an iconostasis (34). The displeasure of the clergy can also be easily understood, if Vahan did actually substitute icons for the cross which, for the Armenians, was the foremost object of worship.

This distaste for the presence of numerous images as well as for extreme forms of image-worship may be seen in, a letter written by the Catholicos Khatchik, (973-992), to the Bishop of Sebastia. He criticizes the Greeks for paying to the carved and painted images the homage due only to God, and he adds that their numerous pictures and the forms of their devotion have made them appear ridiculous in the eyes of the ignorant people (35).

Khatchik makes a difference between the ordinary images and those not made by human hands, such as the portrait of Christ sent to King Abgar; the latter can be worshipped (36). A similar position is held in the following [76] century by Ananias of Sanahin who objects to the presence of numerous pictures, and states that he worships the cross and the living image of Christ on the cross, while the Greeks and Georgians pay greater honor to the images (37). In his letter, Khatchik had also upheld the practice of "baptizing" the crosses with water and wine. The Armenians do this, because the cross on which Christ was nailed was "baptized" with the water and blood which flowed from His side. They further sanctify the cross with prayers and readings from the New Testament (38).

The third phase of iconoclasm in Armenia is connected with the heresy of the T'ondraketsis, which started in the last years of the ninth century and spread during the late tenth and eleventh centuries (39). Like their predecessors the Paulicians, with whom they were closely allied in their beliefs, the T'ondraketsis. were violently opposed to the cross. They destroyed it wherever they saw it, claiming that they were no worshippers of matter, but of God (40). Gregory Magistros, who played an important part in suppressing this heresy within his own provinces, haughtily rejects the accusations of idolatry. Writing to a renegade heretic, he admonishes him to pray before the cross and to honor the pictures of the saints. "When thou seest the sign of the cross, thou shalt pray, because it reminds thee that Jesus Christ was crucified for thee; and thou must regard thyself as crucified along with Him...Thou shalt honor the pictures of the saints and in thy prayers shalt meditate upon their sufferings and martyrs' deaths, submitting thyself to them as thy teachers. They are related to thee, and have become witnesses of the truth. So shalt thou invoke them as thine intercessors before the true God; in order that He who sleeps not may, according to thy trust in His servant the martyr, pity thee who lovest the martyrs" (41).

The type of honor to be paid to the saints, and consequently to their pictures, is more clearly explained in a treatise by John Sarkavag *vardapet*, the abbot of Haghbat in the late eleventh century (42). This writing is not addressed to the iconoclasts; on the [77] contrary it aims to eliminate excessive forms of image-worship and to correct some of the errors which seem to have been current at that time. John Sarkavag states that we have not been ordered to worship the tombs or the images of men, even though they be saints. It is a pious custom to honor the relics of the blessed, and the Church teaches us to invoke their intercession before the Lord. But to substitute them for the Saviour and the Lord is unholiness, and we must not fall into the error of paying to His servants, or to any creatures, the incomparable honor which is only due to God (43). We build martyriums and memorials for the elect of God who suffered in His name, but in prostrating ourselves before their bones, we really do so before Christ. We beg them, whose images appear in paint or in any other material in the churches and martyriums, to be our intercessors and helpers (44).

John Sarkavag further explains that worship and the act of bowing down, that is the *proskynesis*, can only be tendered to God. A different honor is due to Him who by His nature has the incomparable glory and the true kingship; and a different one to those who are created by Him. We must bow down before the cross, not as before an object, but because Christ suffered on it, and through it saved us from a double death. We must bow down before the divine image given to King Abgar, as we would before the Word which was made flesh; when we see it painted in the churches, and prostrate ourselves before it, we do so before Christ Himself. John Sarkavag also refers to the miraculous portrait of the Virgin painted by the apostle John, mentioned above. This must be considered as higher than the images of the saints; but, once again, in bowing down before it we beg the Virgin to intercede for us to Him who became flesh through her (45).

These differences in the types of worship, namely adoration or mere honor, which recall the differentiation made by the Byzantine writers between the *latreutike proskynesis* and the *timetike proskynesis* also appear in the writings of Nerses the Gracious. In the course of the discussions between the Armenian and Greek churches during the second half of the twelfth century, Nerses explained the position held by the Armenians in regard to image-worship. It would seem that some opposition still lingered among certain elements of the population, or that the Greeks ascribed to the Church the views held by the heretics, for they accused the [78] Armenians of not

honoring the images. Nerses the Gracious answered that only the stupid and ignorant people insult the images, and they are anathematized by the Church. "We, who have the rank of an archbishop," he adds, "we accept them; we bow down before the image of our Saviour; we respect the images of all the saints, each one according to his rank; we represent them in our churches and on our sacred vestments" (46). But the same honor is not due to the representations of Christ, or of the cross, and to those of the saints. "We honor and glorify the images of the saints, who are our intermediaries and our intercessors before God; but the *proskynesis* is offered to God, through them; for it is only due to the creator and not to the created...The images and names of the faithful servants of God, who by their nature are our fellow servants, must be honored and respected, each one according to his merits. In seeing their virtuous deeds represented on the pictures, we must take them as our models, and recall their sufferings in the cause of truth. Whoever insults them, does not insult the material out of which the picture is made, but him in whose name it is painted, be he the Lord or His servant" (41).

Nerses the Gracious also speaks of the respect due to the cross and explains why it must be anointed. The cross is the chariot and the throne on which Christ the King is ever present; the *proskynesis* and adoration are therefore rendered to the crucified Christ, and not to the material throne. "God is invisible by His nature; in bowing down before the visible cross, we do so before the invisible God, according to the commandments we received from the holy apostles. While with our bodily eyes we see its material and true shape, with the eyes of the spirit, and our faith, we perceive the invisible power of God united with it" (48). When you see the cross, he adds, "know and believe that you are seeing Christ enthroned on it; when you pray before the cross, believe that you are conversing with Christ, and not with inanimate matter. For it is Christ who receives your *proskynesis* offered to the cross; it is He who hears the supplications of your mouth, and fulfills the desires of your heart, which you ask with faith. Whoever does not honor the [79] cross or insults it, insults Christ Himself and not the inanimate matter" (49).

However, only the anointed crosses must be honored, for divine power is then indivisibly united with them. Otherwise, the honor would be addressed to mere matter, and the worship of what is created has been condemned by the holy books as idolatry (50). The rite of blessing a cross was not originated by the Armenians, but by the Greek fathers, writes Nerses to Alexius, the son-in-law of the emperor Manuel, and later to Manuel himself, and their writings which were translated by the Armenians, are still to be seen in the original text among the old manuscripts preserved in the East (51). The holy apostles, and the blessed fathers who succeeded them, placed before them the four-armed cross made of any material, and laying their hands on it, they offered up a prayer, as the Spirit moved them, that the sensible matter might receive the intelligible power of God. Then, setting up the cross towards the east, they commanded the faithful to prostrate themselves before it. From these crosses proceeded the greatest signs and power. But when the visible graces of the Spirit dwindled among the faithful, because of their weakness, a new rite was devised. The words of the inspired prophets, of the apostles and evangelists were read over the cross; and having recited the prayers, the priests washed the cross with water and wine, after the pattern of the streams which flowed from the sides of Christ on the first cross. They further anointed the cross with chrism, that through the grace of the Holy Ghost and the intercession of those, whose words were read over it, and whose names were recalled, the same divine power which had dwelt in the first crosses erected by the saints, might also reside in this one (52). The following prayer is cited as an example of the invocation to be made. "Dwell forever in this, as on Thy first cross, and let it be for Thee, a temple, a throne and an instrument of power, so that our *proskynesis* before this, should not be tendered to a material, created thing, but to Thee, the only and invisible God" (53). "What is more fitting," writes Nerses to the emperor Manuel, "to read first the divine words of the prophets, the apostles, the evangelists, and the prayers of the priest over the newly-made cross, and then set it [80] up towards the east and bow down before it; or to offer the *proskynesis* to mere matter, which has not been blessed, so that any cruciform shape, which is painted or made in some other material, might become an object of worship" (54)?

These explanations were current in the Armenian Church. They had already been used a century earlier by the Bishop George, in his letter to the Syrian patriarch John (55). George explained the custom of washing the crosses with water and wine by referring to the water and blood which had poured from Christ's side, whereby the cross had been hallowed, and the instrument of death had become an instrument of life. He also wrote that by bowing down before a cross which had not been blessed, the faithful would be acting in a heathenish and devilish manner, for the *proskynesis* would be offered to mere wood and stone, to a created thing and not to God, the Creator (56).

As the criticisms addressed to the Armenians frequently dealt with the consecration of the crosses, we find primarily in their writings a defense of this practice and of the worship of the cross. It is true, as Mekhit'ar Gosh wrote in the early thirteenth century, that "the Greeks and the Georgians honored the images more; the Armenians, the cross" (57), but there was no real opposition to the images. One of the canons of the council held at Sis in the first years of the thirteenth century reads: "To accept the painted images of the Saviour and of all the saints, and not to insult them as images of the pagans" (58). In 1342 Pope Benedict XII sent to the Armenians a long list of one hundred and seventeen supposed errors which they were asked to correct. Among them figured the accusations that the Armenians anathematized the image-worshippers and that in Greater Armenia there were no crucifixes or images of the saints. To this the Armenians replied that although there had been a time when the ignorant people among the Armenians and the Greeks had objected to images, this was no longer true, and that at all times the clergy had accepted the images of the saints and had represented [81] them in the churches. If there were not many in Greater Armenia, this was merely due to the presence of the Saracens who persecuted the images and those who owned them (59).

It can be seen from what has been said that the Armenian church was never opposed to images, or to certain forms of image-worship. The greatest honor was reserved for the cross, and the large number of carved crosses which have survived bear witness to this. The walls of the churches were decorated with figure sculpture and paintings, but there were few icons, and the respect paid to the portraits of saints differed from that tendered to the cross and the images of Christ. The clergy, especially in Greater Armenia, did not favor excessive forms of image-worship nor the presence of numerous pictures in the churches. This may be partly ascribed to their distaste for the usages which more closely resembled those of the Greek Church, and their fear that by adopting them they might be tainted with Chalcedonism. The real opposition to images, the iconoclastic movements, were all led by the heretic groups which, at various times, threatened the peace of the country, and of the Church.

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Footnotes

[67]

1. According to Agathangelus, the chapels of the martyrs Hrip'sime and Gayane were adorned with gold and silver lamps and with candles (Agathangelus, *History* [Venice, 1862], p. 570.) Elisiaeus states that the churches erected by the Armenians in the Persian provinces surpassed in splendor the royal residences, and that the martyriums were embellished with the same ornaments as the churches. (Victor Langlois, *Collection des historiens anciens et modernes de l'Arménie* [Paris, 1869], vol. II, p. 202.)

2. Agathangelus, *op. cit.*, p. 578. I have translated as "bowing-down" or "prostrating oneself," the word *erkirpaganel* which is the Armenian equivalent of *proskyneses*.

[68]

3. Agathangelus, *op. cit.*, p. 579.

4. Agathangelus, *op. cit.*, pp. 587, 589, 590, 625. The historian Zenob of Glak mentions the wooden cross erected by Saint Gregory in the province of Taron on the site of the idol Gisane' and others set up by King Tiridates and the princes of Armenia (Zenob of Glak, *History of Taron* [Venice, 1889], pp. 37, 45-6). Elisiaeus speaks of the crosses raised everywhere in place of the infamous ceremonies of the pagans, which were abolished (*Ibid.*, vol. II, p. 205).

5. Agathangelus, *op. cit.*, p. 72. See also p. 71.

6. Agathangelus, *op. cit.*, pp. 556, 557, 560-562.

7. Archbishop Garegin Hovsep'ian, *Materials and Studies for the History of Armenian Art and Culture* (New York, 1944), vol. III, pp. 119-123 and fig. 28, 31-34, 39, 43, 56, 66, 71-79, 85, 86, 91, 97-101.

8. Archbishop Garegin Hovsep'ian, *op. cit.*, pp. 8-27, Sirarpie Der Nersessian, *Armenia and the Byzantine Empire* (Cambridge, 1945), p. 88 and pl.X.1.

9. Archbishop Garegin Hovsep'ian, *op. cit.*, p. 24, fig. 16.

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10. Joseph Strzygowski, *Die Baukunst der Armenier und Europa* (Vienna, 1918), vol. I, p. 429, fig. 467. There is also some figure sculpture at Ughusli, Odsun, and S. Der Nersessian, "Une apologie des images du septième siècle," in *Byzantion*, XVII (1944), pp. 71-73.

11. The letter is incorporated in the *History of the Albanians* by Moses Kaghankatvatsi (Tiflis, 1912), pp. 302-305. For the date of the letter and its discussion see, S. Der Nersessian, "Une apologie arménienne des images du septième siècle," in *Byzantion*, XVII (1944).

12. The arrest of the three iconoclasts must have been made about the year 633; see S. Der Nersessian, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

13. K. Ter Mkrttschian, *Die Paulikianer im byzantinischen Kaiserreiche* (Leipzig, 1893), p. 57. n.l.

[70]

14. John of Odsun, *Complete Works* (Venice, 1833), p. 39.

15. S. Der Nersessian, "Une apologia des images du septième siècle," in *Byzantion*, XVII, pp. 158-87. For the Armenian text see Garegin Z. Sahakian, *On the Intercession of the Saints* (Venice, 1853), pp. 325-342; or Archbishop E. Tourian, in *Sion*, 1927, pp. 22-25 and 61-63.

16. G. Sahakian, *op. cit.*, pp. 337, 341. S. Der Nersessian. *op. cit.*, pp. 65-67.

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16a. One may wonder whether these iconoclasts are to be identified with the Chatzintzarii mentioned in the Greek texts. According to Demetrius of Cyzica (Migne, P. G. CXXVI, 881-8; the text is here wrongly attributed to Philip Solitarius), and to Nicephorus Callistus (P. G. CXLVII, 441-7) their name was derived from the Armenian word for cross: *khatch*, because they worshipped the cross though rejecting all images. Thus far the description fits with our iconoclasts, but the Greek authors add that these men believed that there were two persons in Christ, one of whom had suffered on the cross, while the other had watched his sufferings. If this is correct, one is surprised not to find it mentioned in the Armenian treatise, for such an extreme form of the doctrine of the two natures would have aroused the wrath of the Armenians, even more than the opposition to the images. It is interesting nevertheless to find another reference to Armenian iconoclasts of the seventh century, for the name which means in Armenian "servant of the cross" (*xach'in tsar'ay*) is a clear indication of their nationality.

17. John of Odsun, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

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18. *Ibid.*, pp. 40, 42.

19. *Ibid.*, pp. 41-42.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 43.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 44.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 32.

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23. Ghevond, *Histoire des guerres et des conquêtes des Arabes*, traduite par G. Chahnazarian (Paris, 1856), p. 98.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 147.

25. This church was built in 936 by the Bishop James. Stephen Orbelian, *History of Siunik'* (Tiflis, 1910), pp. 254, 256-7.

26. *Ibid.*, pp. 203, 215, 304. 315, 470. 485.

27. Ghevond, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

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28. Moses of Khoren, *Complete Works* (Venice 1865), pp. 283-296. This account was supposedly written upon the request of Prince Sahak Ardžruni.

29. Archbishop Garegin Hovsep'ian, *The Amenap'rkitch of Havuts T'ar and Similar Monuments in Armenian Art* (Jerusalem, 1937), p. 36, fig. 17. The author has shown that this relief must not be confused with the image brought to Armenia in the late seventh century by the patrice Ashot. It was presented to the Armenians by Byzantine Emperor Basil II, and placed by Gregory Magistros in the church of Havuts T'ar which he erected for this purpose in A.D. 1044 (*Ibid*, pp. 2-8).

30. *Ibid.*, pp. 3 and 87.

31. Samuel of Ani, *Chronological Table*, see Marie Felicité Brosset, *Collection d'historiens arméniens* (Saint Petersburg, 1876), vol. II, p. 439. Kirakos Gandsaketsi, *History* (Venice, 1865), p. 49. Vardan Vardapet, *History* (Venice, 1862), p. 89. Asoghik does not mention the images, but merely states that he had shown in his letters his

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keen wish to ally himself with the Chalcedonians: Stephen Asoghik of Taron, *History* (Paris, 1859), p. 168.

32. Stephen Orbelian, *op. cit.*, p. 289.

33. *Ibid.*, p. 455.

34. Mgr. Malachia Ormanian, *Azgapatum* (Constantinople, 1912), vol. I, pp. 1112-1114.

35. Asoghik, *op. cit.*, p. 227-8. This passage which is somewhat obscure, reads: "zk'andakealn kam zgreal patkern i niwt's omans pashte'k' astuatsarelabar aynk'an bazmut'eamb ew pashto'nasirut'eamb, minch' zi ew yantsano't's ew ork' och' en mez yanun ekeal, dzgik', zi iwtrak'anch'iwr ok' ar'antsinn e' k'urm ew to'n. ew yachaxagoyn e"nd niwt' galov tgitats', och' e' zgushagoyn"

36. *Ibid.*, pp. 228-9.

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37. Archbishop Garegin Hovsep'ian, *The Amenap'rkitch of Havuts T'ar*, p. 44.
38. Asoghik, *op. cit.*, p. 229.
39. Mgr. Malachia Ormanian, *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 1068-1070, 1167-1173, 1246-1248. K. Ter Mkrttschian, *op. cit.*, pp. 82-91.
40. Aristakes of Lastivert, *History* (Venice, 1901), pp. 120, 125. Paul of Taron, writing in the early twelfth century states that the T'ondraketsis "declared cross and church to be alien to the Godhead." Quoted by Fred. C. Conybeare in *The Key of Truth* (Oxford, 1898). p. 175.
41. F. C. Conybeare. *op. cit.*, Appendix III, pp. 149-150.
42. Garegin Z. Sahakian, *On the Intercession of Saints*, pp. 343-359.
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43. *Ibid.*, pp. 348-9.
44. *Ibid.*, pp. 351-2.
45. *Ibid.*, pp. 350, 351-6.
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44. Saint Nerses the Gracious, *Encyclical Letters* (Jerusalem, 1871), p. 98. The historian Kirakos mentions an embroidered altar-curtain, with the portraits of Christ and of the saints, which was presented to the church of Getik, built by Mekhit'ar Gosh at the end of the twelfth century (*op. cit.*, p. 111).
45. Saint Nerses the Gracious, *op. cit.*, pp. 140, 141.
46. *Ibid.*, Letter addressed to the Christians of Mesopotamia, p. 272.
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49. *Ibid.*, p. 273.
50. *Ibid.*, p. 271.
51. *Ibid.*, pp. 101 and 139.
52. *Ibid.*, Letter to the Christians of Mesopotamia, p. 270; see also the letter to Alexius, pp. 101-102.
53. *Ibid.*, p. 101.
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54. *Ibid.*, pp. 139-140.

55. *The Book of Letters* (Tiflis, 1901), pp. 335-357. The author of the letter had previously been identified with the Catholicos George II of Garni (877-897), but it has been shown that he lived at a much later period and that he must be the Bishop George of Lori who occupied the patriarchal throne for five years (ca. 1067-1072) during the absence of Gregory II Vkasaser (Mgr. Ormanian, *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 983, 1285-6.)

56. *The Book of Letters*, p. 345.

57. Archbishop G. Hovsep'ian, *The Amenap'rkitch of Havuts T'ar*, p. 44.

58. Kirakos, *History*, p. 83.

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59. Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio* (Venice, 1782) vol. XXV. col. 1249.
